

ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE

BEDLINGTONSHIRE

Urban District Council,

FOR THE YEAR 1922,

BY

W. HUDSON,


Medical Officer of Health.

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
OF THE
Bedlingtonshire Urban District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit the report on the Health and Sanitary condition of your district for the year 1922. Undoubtedly this is the most favourable report in the annual records of Bedlingtonshire. Generally speaking there has been a decrease in the incidence of Infectious Disease, a fall in the Death Rate, and a phenomenal drop in the Infantile Mortality Rate.

It must be admitted that seasonable conditions during the year have been influential in bringing about these circumstances, particularly in relation to Infective Enteritis; yet other diseases, i.e. Tuberculosis, unaffected to any degree by such climatic conditions, has shown a diminution, both from a standpoint of deaths and cases notified, whilst deaths from Cancer can be included in the same category.

Overcrowding is more acute than in previous years even though 226 houses have now been occupied under the Council's Housing Scheme.

Area (Acres) 9025·784, including water.

Population, 27,420.

Number of Inhabited Houses, 5923 (approx.).

No. of Families or Separate Occupiers, 6400 (approx.).

Rateable Value April, 1922, £78,320 October, 1922, £76,819.

Sum represented by Penny Rate, £326. „ £320.

DEATH RATE.

During the year 268 deaths—128 of males and 140 of females—were registered in the district. There were 41 inward transfers which make a total of 309—155 of males and 154 of females—allocated to the district. This is equivalent to an Annual Death Rate of 11·26 per 1000.

SUMMARY OF DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1922.

	Netherton Ward		Bedlington Ward		Sieekburn Ward		Cambois Ward		West Sleekburn Ward		Choppington Ward		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
January ...	0	3	2	3	5	6	3	2	0	1	7	6	17	21
February ...	0	3	6	6	8	8	4	3	3	3	4	4	25	28
March ...	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	6	7
April ...	9	1	5	3	6	5	0	1	2	1	2	3	15	14
May ...	0	0	2	4	2	1	2	0	0	2	3	2	9	3
June ...	0	0	1	5	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	9	9
July ...	0	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	8	7
August ..	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	0	1	3	1	10	6
September ...	0	1	2	2	2	3	0	1	2	0	2	4	8	11
October ...	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	3	0	0	3	1	8	5
November ..	1	0	3	4	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	7	9
December ...	0	1	3	3	1	6	0	1	0	2	2	1	6	14
	2	12	29	35	36	34	17	16	13	15	31	28	128	140

Deaths of Illegitimate Children under 1 year (included in above Table)—
Males 1, Females 1. Total, 2.

BIRTH RATE.

During the year 712 births—338 of boys and 374 of girls—were registered. This includes illegitimate boys 12 and girls 14. There were 11 inward transfers—5 of boys and 6 of girls—which make a total of 723 births allocated to the district. This is equivalent to an Annual Birth Rate of 26·36 per 1000.

SUMMARY OF BIRTHS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DEC., 1922.

	Netherton Ward		Bedlington Ward		Sleekburn Ward		Cambois Ward		West Sleekburn Ward		Choppington Ward		Total	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
January ...	1	1	9	8	11	10	5	2	6	2	6	6	38	29
February ...	0	1	11	16	8	7	6	7	0	4	12	11	37	46
March ...	3	2	10	8	12	7	2	1	2	3	7	6	36	27
April ...	2	2	6	8	8	7	5	2	1	0	10	7	32	26
May ...	1	2	7	11	4	5	0	2	2	4	10	10	24	34
June ...	2	4	9	4	8	6	2	4	3	3	6	2	30	23
July ...	0	4	6	7	9	5	4	2	1	4	6	12	26	34
August ..	4	6	19	12	6	5	1	4	3	3	5	9	29	39
September ..	1	4	11	7	3	2	2	0	4	2	5	5	26	22
October ...	2	1	11	13	5	6	6	3	2	2	4	8	30	33
November ...	0	2	6	12	4	12	0	4	2	1	3	7	15	38
December ...	1	3	4	7	6	6	0	3	2	1	2	3	15	23
	17	31	100	113	44	81	33	34	28	28	76	86	338	374

Illegitimate Births (included in above Table)—Boys 12, Girls 14.
Total, 26.

GENERAL CONSIDERATION OF DEATH TABLE.

The annual death rate shows a marked fall, and with the exception of February, in which, owing to Influenza and Pneumonia the rate was high, the monthly death returns were much below that of previous years.

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS.—PULMONARY AND OTHER FORMS.

Year.	Totals.	Pulmonary.	Other Forms.	Rate per 1000.
1916	48	36	12	2·00
1917	45	34	11	1·9
1918	41	35	6	1·77
1919	36	28	8	1·31
1920	35	16	19	1·3
1921	52	30	22	1·9
1922	38	25	13	1·38

INFANTILE MORTALITY

51 deaths under one year were registered in the district. There were 2 inward transfers which make the total number allocated to the district 53. This is equivalent to an Infantile Mortality Rate of 73 per 1000 Births, and is the lowest on record.

ALLOCATION OF ZYMOTIC DEATHS TO SUB-DISTRICTS.

	Netherton	Bedlington	W. Sleekburn	Sleekburn	Choppington	Cambois	Total
Enteric Fever ...	0	1	2	0	0	0	3
Small Pox ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever ...	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Diphtheria and Croup ...	0	4	0	0	1	0	5
Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ...	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	0	7	2	1	1	0	11

The table shows a marked decrease in deaths from Zymotic Diseases, particularly Diarrhoea and Enteritis, due to the cool Summer. The 2 cases recorded were deaths in November and December, and these have no relationship to Epidemic Summer Enteritis.

All deaths due to Diphtheria were of the Laryngeal type in which the disease is so frequently fatal.

The principal features of the death table in Infants under 1 year is the gradual decrease in deaths from Prematurity and Wasting. In previous years the high mortality rate was due to these causes, and now the value of the Maternity and Child Welfare work is becoming evident, and by proper dietetic measures infants weakly at birth are reared to be healthy children.

INFANTILE MORTALITY RATES.

Year.	Total Deaths under 1 year.	Rate per 1000 Births.
1910	109	130
1911	133	157
1912	77	96
1913	96	115
1914	107	126
1915	96	129
1916	97	103
1917	68	121
1918	72	115
1919	70	104
1920	92	105
1921	74	95
1922	53	73

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

District.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Enteric Fever.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Fever.	Ophthalmia Neon.	Pneumonia.	Acute Polio. Myelitis.	Tuberculosis.	Infective Enteritis under 2 years.	Totals.
Netherton	2	0	0	1	1	0	10	0	5	0	19
Bedlington	20	8	3	4	0	2	32	0	13	1	83
Choppington	18	3	0	0	0	0	13	0	9	1	42
Sleekburn	28	0	0	1	0	0	41	1	7	3	81
West Sleekburn	10	0	3	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	19
Cambois	9	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	14
Totals	85	11	6	6	1	2	101	1	40	5	258

CASES NOTIFIED DURING THE VARIOUS MONTHS OF THE YEAR.

Month.	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria.	Enteric Fever.	Erysipelas.	Puerperal Fever.	Ophthalmia Neon.	Pneumonia.	Acute Polio. Myelitis.	Tuberculosis.	Enteritis.	Monthly Totals.
January	5	1	0	0	0	0	12	0	1	0	19
February	5	1	0	1	0	1	36	0	2	0	46
March	7	2	0	1	0	0	5	0	6	0	21
April	1	1	0	0	0	0	17	1	6	0	26
May	6	1	0	0	0	0	9	0	5	0	21
June	5	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	3	0	15
July	4	2	3	1	0	1	5	0	3	3	22
August	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
September	6	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	7	1	17
October	8	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	6	0	20
November	11	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	16
December	23	2	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	30
Grand Totals	85	11	6	6	1	2	101	1	40	5	258

PNEUMONIA—CASES NOTIFIED.

	Totals.	0—1	1—2	2—5	5—15	15—25	25—45	45—65
Males	51	6	8	8	5	6	8	10
Females	50	9	13	4	3	1	10	10
	101	15	21	12	8	7	18	20

TUBERCULOSIS—PULMONARY.

Males	8	...	1	1	...	2	3	1
Females	9	...	...	.	1	3	4	1
	17	...	1	1	1	5	7	2

TUBERCULOSIS—OTHER FORMS.

Males	12	..	1	..	5	3	3	...
Females	11	2	1	1	3	4	...	..
	23	2	2	1	8	7	3	...

CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS NOTIFIED AT THE DIFFERENT AGES
IN THE VARIOUS SUB-DISTRICTS DURING 1922.

		Pulmonary. Other Forms,															
		0—1		1—2		2—5		5—15		15—25		25—45		45—65			
Bedlington	8	5	...	...	..	1	..	...	1	2	4	2	3	..	...	..
Netherton	3	2	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	1	1	...
Choppington	2	7	...	1	...	1	1	...	2	...	1	1	1	1	...	...
Sleekburn	4	3	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	1	1	1	...
West Sleekburn	..	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cambois	...	4	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Totals		17	23	...	2	1	2	1	1	1	8	5	7	7	3	2	...

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE
DISTRICT.

Epidemic Influenza as in previous years occurred during the months of January and February, was of a comparatively mild type and accounted for the notification of 36 cases of Pneumonia in January and 31 in February. It is doubtful if any useful purpose is now served by the notification of Pneumonia. This appears to be an unnecessary expense to the L.A.

Scarlet Fever has been prevalent throughout the whole year but principally in the months of November and December. The distribution has been general and the majority of cases have been of a mild nature; in which unrecognised and untreated sufferers have been the means of spreading the infection amongst School Children.

Diphtheria.—Although it is usually admitted that during an epidemic of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria is more prevalent, yet fewer cases have occurred in this district than in previous years. Probably the isolation of school carriers may account for the altered incidence.

Measles.—This is not notifiable but there is every reason to state that during the year very few cases have occurred.

Encephalitis Lethargica or Sleeping Sickness.—No cases were notified during the year.

Enteric Fever.—Six cases occurred during the year, 3 at Bedlington and 3 at West Sleekburn. The mode of infection could in every case only be explained by means of Chronic Carriers as mentioned in previous reports. Although these may be few in number compared with the conditions previous to the altered water supply, yet the entire abolition of this infection can only be assured by a conversion of the P.M. to the W.C. System.

Infective Enteritis.—Few cases were notified during the year on account of the cool Summer.

Acute Polio Myelitis or Infantile Paralysis.—One case occurred in the district and the source of infection could not be determined.

Puerperal Fever.—One case was notified.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.—Two cases notified received treatment and recovered.

Tuberculosis.—40 cases were notified, consisting of Pulmonary 17 and other forms 23, whilst 51 were notified in 1920, 55 in 1921, and in previous years the number was greater. It may be said that many of the old cases have now been notified and received treatment at the Dispensary or Sanatorium, and this accounts for the decrease in later years, yet it must be admitted that with increased facilities for Sanatorium treatment advanced cases are more readily isolated, whilst early cases receive treatment before the disease is so advanced as to be a source of danger to contacts. For these reasons it is probable that in time Sanatorium treatment will bring about a gradual but definite decrease in the incidence of the disease.

Cases treated in Sanatorium during 1922 :—

Cases admitted in 1921 and discharged 1922	...	...	...	4
„ „ and discharged 1922	...	...	...	8
„ undergoing treatment	...	...	...	11
				—
				23

Whooping Cough was prevalent throughout the district during the latter six months of the year and was of a very mild type and generally uncomplicated.

Chicken Pox.—During the months of September, October, November and December, this disease was prevalent. The majority of cases were mild, and although a few severe cases occurred yet there was no indication to recommend notification of the disease.

SCHOOL CLOSURE.

Owing to Epidemic Influenza the whole of the schools within the district were closed. The question of school closure in general was discussed in the report of 1921, and it is doubtful, with the exception of Measles in which the Infant department might be closed, if any beneficial results are derived by the recommendation.

HOSPITALS.

Stakeford.—Isolation Hospital.

Staith Quay.—Infectious Disease Hospital.

Ambulances for non-infective cases are provided by voluntary subscriptions amongst the coal miners. The Local Authority have their ambulance for cases of Infectious Diseases.

NURSING ARRANGEMENTS IN THE DISTRICT.

Each sub-district has its own Private Nursing Association, by which general nursing and mid-wifery are conducted. There is no arrangement with the L.A. either from an administrative or financial standpoint.

There is one mid-wife practising in the district, the supervising authority being the County Council.

The Health Visitors attend all cases of Infectious Diseases which have been notified.

Precautions are duly taken to avoid any danger of conveying infection to other homes in the performance of their duty.

The visitation of Tubercular patients whether awaiting sanatorium treatment, discharged after treatment, or in a condition too far advanced to warrant treatment, is conducted by the County Council. This was formerly done by the L.A. through the agency of the Health Visitors. In order to avoid overlapping, and recognising the undesirability of officers from different sources visiting homes for the same disease, it was deemed advisable to withdraw the Health Visitors from this particular work.

The Clinic and Treatment Centre for Venereal Diseases is at the Royal Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne, whilst that for Tuberculosis is the Dispensary at Ashington, both being provided by the County Council.

LABORATORY WORK.

Bacteriological Examinations are conducted at the College of Medicine, Newcastle-on-Tyne, provision being made by the County Council.

Diphtheria Anti-Toxin is supplied by the Local Authority.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

There has been no change in the administration since the last report.

Glaxo and Virol has been supplied at the Centres during each Session.

Necessitous cases have been granted a free supply after completion of the application form and sanction of the M. and C. Welfare Committee.

The table recommended by the Ministry has guided the committee in this direction.

The mothers have now become accustomed to the weighing of babies in naked state and additional facilities at the centres have overcome this difficulty. The results of Dried Milk are encouraging and until there is a supply of graded milk in the district it would be unwise to advocate Fresh Cow's Milk in preference to Sterilized Dried Milk.

The work of the Maternity and Child Welfare has been affected by the resignation of Nurse Peart, who was absent through illness for the greater part of the year. Nurse Urquhart was temporary appointed, although previous to this Nurse Davies carried on the extra work alone and as efficiently as circumstances permitted. The Medical Officer and Health Visitors are very grateful to all voluntary helpers who have so regularly assisted in the work of the Centres.

HEALTH VISITOR'S REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Bedlingtonshire
Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

The annual report for 1922, submitted for your consideration, is a record of notifications received and a summary of work done in the district. Births registered 723—Males 343, Females 380. Illegitimate Births 32 (included in total of births)—Males 15, Females 17. Births notified to Medical Officer of Health, 683. Stillbirths 31. Deaths registered in Infants under one year of age, 53—Males 29, Females 24. Illegitimate deaths 2 (included in total of deaths)—1 Male, 1 Female. Infantile Mortality rate is 73 per 1000.

17 children left the shire : a record of each case with changed address is sent to the Medical Officer of Health into whose district they have removed. There were 11 children transferred into your district at different periods of the year.

First visits to Maternity cases numbered 750 ; subsequent visits 2842. Infants who are found satisfactory on first visiting are usually visited once in each three months : this year in the majority of cases this was impossible ; the extra visits were given to children whose health record was unsatisfactory. Each case of Stillbirth was visited—total visits numbered 31. Visits to expectant mothers were 13.

Cases of Summer Diarrhoea under 2 years of age, notifiable during July, August, September. Notified were 5, visits to these numbered 8. Ophthalmia Neonatorum cases notified were 2 ; visits to these were 9. Scarlet Fever notified, 85 ; visits were 84. Diphtheria cases notified, 11 ; visits were 15. Swabs taken, 39. Puerperal Fever notified, 1 ; visits paid, 1.

The Health Visitors attend each session of the Welfare Centres. Number of mothers, infants and children who attended the centres were 1084.

I remain,

Yours obediently,

V. A. N. DAVIES, Health Visitor.

HOUSING.

The present position regarding the Housing Question is fully dealt with in the following report presented to the Housing Committee by the Chairman, Councillor G. Baker, on March 8th, 1923 :—

REPORT OF COUNCILLOR G. BAKER,

Chairman of the Housing Committee.

“ As the subsidised Housing Scheme is drawing to a close the Housing Committee desired me to report on its present position in the district.

The completion of the 50 houses at Choppington and Guide Post will bring the total number of houses erected under the Government Subsidy up to 228, out of a total of 572 originally sanctioned by the Ministry. Our programme has been drastically cut, but only in a much similar manner to other districts.

The cost of erecting the 228 houses up to date is approximately £190000 or an overhead charge of £836 per house, inclusive of land, fees, roads, and sewer, so far as these items have been paid.

The cost will compare, I daresay, very favourably with other districts in the North and particularly when we remember that none of our houses have a living room less in gross area than 180 square feet.

Attractive figures appear in the press from time to time announcing that houses are being built at anything from £320 upwards. It is impossible to make a right comparison unless the exact conditions and sizes are known. Many of the houses being built at the lower figure introduce rooms of such dimensions as will make the living rooms (especially) inconvenient and comfortless. It is encouraging to know that up and down the country great efforts are being made to bring the cost of building working class houses to a figure that will give a great stimulus to private enterprise and at the same time reduce the obligation from a financial aspect of Local Authorities who undertake to provide houses.

The need for more houses is urgent, probably more so to-day than it was three years ago. Your Committee is alive to the importance of the matter in Bedlingtonshire and await with much eagerness the decision of the Government with regard to their Housing Policy. In the meantime, designs of smaller houses are under consideration such as will give accommodation to young married couples and to those with small families.

From statistics recently obtained in Bedlingtonshire it appears that whilst in 1919 there were 293 instances of one house being occupied by two families or more, in October 1922 that number had increased to 470 or 62% increase. This is equal to one house in every twelve accommodating two or more families, and means of necessity, a large amount of overcrowding and conditions of living that must give great concern to those anxious for the welfare of the community.

No other problem is so momentous for Local Authorities at the present time and although great efforts have been made, greater still will be required in the future to eradicate from our midst conditions of living that remain a stigma upon our ideas as to what houses should be for people to live in.

To mitigate overcrowding (especially in small houses), and situate where congestion might be much more serious, your Committee were reluctantly compelled to sanction sub-letting as a temporary expedient, in the Council Houses at Bedlington and Sleekburn. The effect upon the property is in some cases already apparent and heavy maintenance charges will very soon be incurred, unless the occupiers of the houses realise that Council Houses

mean houses that belong or will belong to the ratepayers of Bedlington, and as such ought to be regarded with as much care and respect as if they belonged to the tenants themselves. The good sense of all the occupiers is solicited in keeping the property, gardens, paths, etc., in such a condition as will be to their credit and shew a willing co-operation with the Local Authorities.

Your Committee have been, and are still, very perturbed with regard to the arrears of rent gradually increasing from month to month. At the end of January the total arrears, Hollymount and Sleekburn, were £242 18/0, or £1 7/0 per house. As compared with £38 a year ago.

The arrears are distributed over 82 tenants and works out at about £3 or thereabouts per tenant. In several instances legal proceedings have been threatened and would before now have been carried out but for appeals, many no doubt genuine, from the delinquents for further time in which to make an effort to pay the arrears.

The Committee recognises that the rents are excessive, but until the Ministry of Health agrees to a lesser charge they are helpless and must persist in tenants paying the rents demanded.

In this connection the Ministry have now arranged that the question of rents for Council Houses in the Mining Districts of Northumberland and Durham shall be arbitrated upon next month. More than 12 months have elapsed since this question was first taken in hand, despite all the efforts made locally.

The selecting of the tenants for Council Houses has I believe evoked some unfriendly criticism outside. If these people knew the time the Committee has devoted to this work and the great difficulties connected with a matter of this kind they would I think be less disposed to be critical.

Throughout the whole of the appointments the Committee have kept in mind the conditions, viz. : the needs of ex-service men and cases of large families in small houses or cases where two or three families were grouped together in one house. The choice has been extraordinarily difficult at times but I place it on record that with the limited number of houses to allocate the Committee has done its best. The success of the Scheme depends upon the sympathetic support of the tenants themselves and also of the general community."

The following tables of the Housing Survey in 1919 and 1922 give details of the circumstances of each sub-district.

1919 SURVEY.

12

District.	Number of houses with 2 families.	Number of houses with 3 families.	Houses with one room—3 persons or more.	Houses with two rooms—5 persons or more.	Houses with three rooms—8 persons or more.	Houses with four rooms—10 persons or more.	Number of cases of overcrowding.	Back-to-back Houses.	Houses proposed to be demolished.	Houses requiring reconstruction.	Families displaced by the conversion of back-to-back Houses.	Number of Houses required to accom- modate families.
SLEEK BURN ..	70	5	9	70	17	11	107	114	5	55	57	142
STAKEFORD ..	22	4	1	51	6	11	69	2	0	0	1	31
GUIDEPOST ...	17	0	18	80	4	0	102	15	26	144	8	51
CHOPPINGTON ...	35	0	12	106	1	3	122	43	4	16	22	61
CAMBOIS ...	69	7	0	12	22	4	38	0	1	0	0	84
NETHERTON ...	20	2	1	30	16	12	59	0	0	0	0	24
BEDLINGTON ...	60	3	50	115	9	21	195	35	91	60	18	175
TOTALS ..	293	21	91	464	75	62	692	209	127	275	106	568

1922 SURVEY.

DISTRICT.	Number of houses with 2 families.	Number of houses with 3 families.	Houses with one room—3 persons or more.	Houses with two rooms—5 persons or more.	Houses with three rooms—8 persons or more.	Houses with four rooms—10 persons or more.	Number of cases of overcrowding.	Back-to-back Houses.	Houses proposed to be demolished.	Houses requiring reconstruction.	Families displaced by the conversion of back-to-back Houses.	Number of Houses required to accom- modate families.
SLEEK BURN ..	111	4	6	141	14	12	173	114	5	55	57	181
STAKEFORD ...	93	2	1	46	24	5	76	2	0	0	1	98
GUIDEPOST ...	25	5	15	67	1	0	83	15	26	144	8	69
CHOPPINGTON ...	49	1	16	95	4	2	117	43	4	16	22	77
CANBOIS ...	69	2	0	5	18	1	24	0	1	0	0	74
NETHERTON ...	33	6	3	62	10	8	83	0	0	0	0	45
BEDLINGTON ..	90	3	56	111	21	9	197	35	91	60	18	205
TOTALS ...	470	23	97	527	92	37	753	209	127	275	106	749

There is sufficient evidence to show that apart from conditions of overcrowding there is immediate need for 750 houses throughout the district. As already expressed by the Chairman of the Housing Committee the rent and rates are a serious burden to the tenants, and for this reason and also in order to meet the requirements of small families, and at the same time discourage sub-letting, it is hoped that after the Government Housing Policy is disclosed the Local Authority will make every effort to immediately build a sufficient number of a smaller type.

The following conclusions can be drawn from the above tables :—

- (1) That the number of Houses already built by the L.A. have not improved the undesirable conditions existing in 1919.
- (2) That the position regarding family accommodation, overcrowding, etc., is more acute than in 1919.
- (3) The number of houses required to meet the immediate needs, namely 750, does not make any provision for the ever increasing menace of overcrowding.
- (4) That the table in addition makes no provision for increase of population or industrial development.
- (5) That the present conditions are serious and injurious to the health of the community, and until accommodation is provided little can be done to deal with dwellings which are earmarked for demolition.

SCAVENGING.

No. of Privies ...	...	...	...	...	3585.
„ W.C.'s ...	...	...	...	...	1284.
„ Open Ashpits ...	...	...	...	...	1944.
„ Covered Ashpits ...	...	...	...	...	875.
„ Bins ...	...	...	...	...	131.
„ Houses where P. Middens exist ...	...	...	...	...	4595.
„ „ „ W.C.'s „ ...	...	...	...	...	1354.

It will be seen from the above table that the P.M. System still preponderates, a condition which from a Health standpoint is very undesirable. The storage of Faecal Matter largely accounts for the prevalence of certain diseases, particularly Enteric Fever and Infective Enteritis or Summer Diarrhoea, and more especially in conditions where the P.Ms. are in close proximity to dwelling houses. This opens up the question of conversion to W.Cs., a measure which is most urgently needed and which must be faced. It cannot be solved immediately and many difficulties will no doubt arise. In order to come to a decision I would suggest that the following particulars should be prepared for your early consideration.

1. A map of the district showing the situation of Privy Middens and Water Closets.
2. The demand for water which would be entailed in the conversion beyond your present consumption.

3. The capacity of the sewers and drains and if able to deal with the increased sewage.

4. An estimate of the average cost of conversion.

5. The possibility of raising a loan to cover any cost involved with a view to spreading it over a number of years.

6. The cost of emptying the privy middens at present and the estimated cost of removal of dry refuse from bins after conversion, in addition to the cost of water for W.Cs. and repayment of principal and interest on capital expenditure.

That this is an urgent Sanitary Measure cannot be denied. The Health of the community cannot be measured in £ s. d. The conversion could be conducted at the rate of about 500 per year and this would mean the matter of 10 years before the scheme was completed. The crux of the Scavenging question lies in abolition of the P.M. System, and although the matter has been mentioned in previous reports I hope something will be accomplished in the near future.

I am of the opinion that many of the suggested difficulties would readily be overcome without any unreasonable burden being placed on the Ratepayers. In conjunction with this question I should like to put forward again the adoption of the P.H. Act Amendment Act, 1907, section 39 dealing with the Provision and Conversion of Closet accommodation.

SURVEYOR'S REPORT.

ROADS.

During the year 53,000 square yards of tarmacadam was laid on the roads in the district and 28,000 square yards of tarspraying was carried out by direct labour.

Plans and estimates were prepared and a scheme submitted to the County Council for putting the whole of the main roads and footpaths in the district into good condition, and it is hoped to carry out this work during the coming year.

Dangerous corners have been improved at the junction of Netherton Road with the Morpeth and Shields main roads ; west of Guide Post on the Stakeford main road, and Hartford Corner near Hartford Bridge.

Plans, estimates, and provisional apportionments have been made for the making up of Palace Road and Milbank Road under the Private Street Works Act, 1892, which was adopted by the Council during the year. North Terrace, Bedlington, has been made up for the Bedlington Coal Co.

The majority of the back streets in the district are in bad condition and this is a question which the Council should take into consideration at an early date.

One new horse-drawn tarspraying machine and another steam roller were purchased during the year.

The roads and footpaths at the Hollymount and Sleekburn Housing sites were completed and the roads and footpaths at the Stakeford Housing site were well in hand at the end of the year.

WATER SUPPLY.

The quantity of water consumed in the district during the year was 172,722,000 gallons which is equal to an average daily consumption of 473,210 gallons.

The work of laying water mains to the Hollymount and Sleekburn Housing sites was completed in the early part of the year, and mains and connections laid to the Stakeford Housing site.

Owing to the increase in the number of houses in your district some of the water mains are at times insufficient to meet the demands made upon them and it will be necessary for the Council to consider this question during the ensuing year.

Water meters have been fixed on the services to the Picture Halls and the 2" main extended at Bedlington Station. Building connections have been made as required.

SEWERS.

The existing sewers have been maintained and periodically cleansed and the 12" sewer on Stakeford Lane extended for a distance of 110 yards.

The sewers from Netherton, Choppington Colliery, Scotland Gate, Barrington, Bomarsund and Red Row at present discharge into the Sleekburn, and the question of laying a main sewer to collect the sewage from the existing outlets is under the consideration of the Council.

PUBLIC LIGHTING.

5 additional gas lamps were fixed and 43 upright gas burners substituted by twin inverted burners.

RECREATION GROUNDS.

The Netherton Recreation Ground has been enclosed by a military fence.

ALLOTMENTS.

Three acres of land have been leased for allotment purposes from Major Burdon at East End, Bedlington, and has been laid out, fenced and let.

An additional acre of land was leased at Bomarsund from the West Sleekburn Estate Co. Ltd., and has been fenced. 300 yards of fencing were erected at Rothesay Terrace Allotments and 150 yards at East Sleekburn Allotments.

J. W. POOLEY, Surveyor.

The following Acts have been adopted by the Council :—

Part 3 of the Public Health Act Amendment Act, 1890. 13/1/10.

Part 4 „ „ „ „ „ 1907
relating to Recreation Grounds 12/1/20.

Private Streets Works Act, 1892 ... 21/10/22.

It is desirable in the interests of Health that the following Acts should be adopted :—

(1) Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890. This would give additional power to the Local Authority in dealing with Infectious Diseases.

(2) Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907. Part 3—Sanitary Provisions. This Act should be adopted in its entirety and particularly Section 39.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

HOUSING.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total	...	...	...	156
(b) As part of a municipal housing scheme	...	...	...	148

1. *Unfit dwelling-houses.*

Inspection—(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 162

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910 ... 162

(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... —

(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... —

2. *Remedy of Defects without Service of formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ... 143

3. *Action under Statutory Powers.*

A.—Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... —

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—

(a) by owners ... —

(b) by Local Authority in default of owners

(3) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close ... —

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	107
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">82 Yard row, 1921.</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">4 Guide post, 1921.</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">57—1922.</div> </div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: 3em; line-height: 1;">}</div> </div>
(a) by owners	
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	

C.—Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909.

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders ...	—
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing orders were made	—
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses have been rendered fit ...	—
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ...	—
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders... ..	—

During the year a Housing Survey has been completed for the purpose of ascertaining the number of persons occupying the Working Class Dwellings within the district. The result is presented in the former part of this report. Although the number of dwellings contained in the Council's Housing Schemes have been erected within Bedlington, Sleekburn and Stakeford, the diminution of overcrowding appears to be very vague. To accept the standard that a house is overcrowded when the number of inmates exceeds double the number of rooms then many houses are overcrowded, and several contain more than one common occupier.

Back-to-back and Insanitary Houses prevail within East End, Bedlington, West End, Bedlington, Bank Top, Sleekburn, Scotland Gate, Guide Post, Barrington and Netherton. Many of these are ready for Reconstruction and others Demolition. On account of the scarcity of houses great difficulty is experienced in dealing with the same, and until provision for the unhoused is made the Local Authority find it impossible to call upon closure. To justify such a step the number of houses must exceed the demand, and if the Insanitary Houses are dealt with at present then inevitably overcrowding will be increased. Under these circumstances the Local Authority are inclined to pause before deciding to take steps under the Housing Acts, 1909 (Secs. 17–18), and as soon as the required number of houses are erected I have no doubt the Council will then design the areas to be inspected and represented with a view to Closure and Demolition. Many houses within the district requiring repairs and improvements are so constructed so as to prevent the immediate action permitted under the Acts of 1919, Sec. 28.

DWELLINGS.

District.	Inspected.	Defective.	Remedied.	
Bedlington	... 21	21	21	East End, Bell's Place, Kidd's Yard, Charlton's Buildings and Rothesay Terrace.
Sleekburn	... 6	6	6	2 Red Row, 2 Furnace, 2 Clayton Street.
Guide Post	... 14	14	14	Sawmill Row 8, Rose Villas 2, Tulip's Buildings 2, Byron Street 2.
Choppington	.. 1	1	1	Richardson's Buildings.
Stakeferd	... 3	3	0	Wilkinson's Buildings 2, Marshes Cottages.
West Sleekburn	—	—	—	
Cambois	... 1	1	1	New Row.
Netherton	... 116	61	11	Howard Row 7, Clifton Row 3. 50 Houses in New Rows to repair.
	162	107	57	
	—	—	86	4 repaired at Guide Post and 82 at Yard Row, Netherton, from year 1921.
Totals	... 162	107	143	

ABATEMENT OF NUISANCES.

DRAINAGE.

District.	Foul.	Defective.	Untrapped.	No. Remedied.
Bedlington	... 24	3	—	29
Sleekburn	... 10	1	—	11
Guide Post	... 11	2	—	13
Choppington	... 14	1	—	15
Stakeford	... 6	1	—	7
West Sleekburn...	9	1	—	10
Cambois	... 2	2	—	4
Netherton	... 7	1	—	8
Totals	... 83	12	—	95

SANITARY CONVENIENCES—W.C's.

District.			Foul.	Defective.	No. Remedied.
Bedlington	...	...	37	6	43
Sleekburn	...	...	18	3	21
Guide Post	...	...	6	2	8
Choppington	...	...	13	2	15
Stakeford	...	...	7	1	8
West Sleekburn	...	...	—	—	—
Cambois	...	...	—	—	—
Netherton	...	...	—	—	—
Totals	...	...	81	14	95

SANITARY CONVENIENCES OTHER THAN W.C's.

District.			Foul.	Defective.	No. Remedied.
Bedlington	...	...	9	7	16
Sleekburn	...	...	5	16	21
Guide Post	...	...	3	7	10
Choppington	...	...	6	11	17
Stakeford	...	...	3	12	15
West Sleekburn	...	...	1	3	4
Cambois	...	...	1	2	3
Netherton	...	...	9	7	16
Totals	...	...	37	65	102

HOUSE REFUSE RECEPTACLES.

District.			Foul.	Defective.	No. Remedied.
Bedlington	...	...	39	25	64
Sleekburn	...	...	20	20	40
Guide Post	...	...	13	13	26
Choppington	...	...	6	22	28
Stakeford	...	...	7	7	14
West Sleekburn	...	...	4	3	7
Cambois	...	...	6	9	15
Netherton	...	...	11	9	20
Totals	...	...	106	108	214

Dilapidated roofs and walls have been the chief defects.

In several instances common nuisances have occurred through the keeping of animals, storing manure for unlimited periods, filthy yards and passages, and the fouling of ash pits by vegetable matter and liquid. No. of notices served, 37.

CONVERSIONS.

No conversions from the conservancy system to the water-carriage system have taken place during the year. In late years the evils arising from the privy-midden system have been discussed together with the adoption of Sec. 39 of the P.H.A.A., 1907, and now the time should certainly arrive for Water Closet substitution.

CLEANSING OF ASHPITS.

The district is divided into sections—the work being done by Contractors. Here again the system cannot be said to be effectual on account of the number of privy middens. Offences often appear where privies are connected with the ashpits through the inefficient cleansing of the privy. At times the nuisances caused thereby are aggravated through the general method of complaining. By Section 42 of the P.H.A., 1875, the L.A. may undertake or contract for the removal of house refuse and the cleansing of privies, and it is the sole duty of the occupier by Sec. 43 of the same Act to give notice in writing for the cleansing of house refuse and privies.

The collections take place monthly, fortnightly and weekly. Bins are cleansed 3 times per week. The tips consist of disused brick works and land for agricultural purposes. 73 notices have been served through continued inspection.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

17 exist on the register and one licensed. 40 visits have been made and in 6 instances cleansing has been called for. 1 addition has been made at Netherton during the year.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

4 are on the Register. Monthly visits are made and in 4 instances cleansing has been called for. When demolition of property comes into operation the L.A. will probably take steps for Closure.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

These chiefly consist of Fish and Chip Shops. Eleven exist within the district and attention has been paid to the cleanliness of these premises.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PREVENTION.

241 houses have had final disinfection. 6 cases of Enteric Fever have been removed to the Hospital and bedding disinfected.

Schools have been fumigated in 56 cases.

The privy middens and drains within the district are systematically disinfected.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS & MILKSHOPS.

During the year these have been ^{re}registered :—

Purveyor with Cowsheds ...	...	...	...	49
Purveyor without Cowsheds ...	...	...	...	9
Milkshops ...	...	...	...	3

No. of ^{cowsh.}cases, 413. No. of visits, 147.

The number of cowsheds within the district are much above the average and are situated at various distances from each other, and to ensure a pure milk supply incessant inspection has been continued.

1 Cowshed at Stakeford has been rebuilt and others are undergoing repairs.

27 notices have been served during the year and 13 remedied.

Offences which have come under observation :—

Cleanliness—Limewashing at proper intervals.

Removal of manure from floors. Large accumulations of manure frequently occur within a few yards of cowsheds thus increasing the evils of drainage.

Lighting—The repairs of windows with wood.

Ventilation—The choking of permanent inlets to keep the cows warm. All the cows are habitually grazed with the exception at intervals during the winter period. It often occurs the attention of the owners has to be directed toward the evils of overcrowding of the byres. Although the cubic space may be sufficient floor space is most essential.

Channelling, Florage and Drainage—Repairs in 13 cases have been called for.

Water Supply—The provision is constant.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, WORK-PLACES & HOMEWORK.

Registered Workshops	...	35	inspected.
„ Factories	...	23	„
„ Workplaces	...	15	„
		—	
		73	

In 7 instances notices have been served for Limewashing, Cleansing and Sanitary accommodation.

16 Registered Factories consisting of Cycle and Motor Works, Boot and Shoe Makers, Brick Works, Aerated Water Works, Sawmill and Cartwrights, and Candle Works.

Bakeries (none underground)	...	...	5
Workshops	...	...	72
Workplaces	...	...	3
			—
Total	...	...	80

R. M. LAVERICK, Sanitary Inspector.

I take this opportunity of thanking the members of the Council for their courtesy and assistance in carrying out the duties of my office.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. HUDSON, Medical Officer of Health.

Causes of, and Ages at Death during the Year 1921.

CAUSE OF DEATH.		NETT DEATHS AT THE SUBJOINED AGES OF "RESIDENTS," WHETHER OCCURRING WITH IN OR WITHOUT THE DISTRICT.								
		Total.	Under 1 year.	1 & under 2 years.	2 & under 5 years.	5 & under 15 years.	15 & under 25 years.	25 & under 45 years.	45 & under 65 years.	65 years. and up.
All Causes	Certified	... 303	52	20	12	10	13	36	65	95
	Uncertified	... 6	1						3	2
1	Enteric Fever ...	3					1	1	1	
2	Small Pox ...									
3	Measles ..									
4	Scarlet Fever ...	1		1						
5	Whooping Cough ..	2	2							
6	Diphtheria and Croup ..	5	1	2	1	1				
7	Influenza ...	18	1	3	1			3	7	3
8	Erysipelas ...									
9	Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	25	1	1	2	1	4	12	4	
10	Tuberculosis Meningitis ...	5	2	2		1				
11	Other Tuberculous Disease	8	2	1		1		1	2	1
12	Cancer, Malignant disease	23					1		10	12
13	Rheumatic Fever ..	1							1	
14	Meningitis ...									
15	Organic Heart Disease ...	34	2			1		4	15	12
16	Bronchitis ...	18	3		2				4	9
17	Pneumonia—all Forms ...	28	10	5	2		2	3	3	3
18	Other diseases of Respiratory Organs	3			1				1	1
19	Diarrhoea and Enteritis ...	2		2						
20	Appendicitis ...									
21	Cirrhosis of Liver ...									
21a	Alcoholism ..									
22	Nephritis and Bright's Disease	8			1				3	4
23	Puperal Fever ...	1					1			
24	Other accidents and diseases of Preg- nancy and Parturition ..	2						2		
25	Congenital Debility and Malformation including Premature Birth	23	23							
26	Violent Deaths, excluding Suicide	14				2	2	3	2	5
27	Suicide ..	4					1	3		
28	Other Defined Diseases ...	75	5	3	2	3	1	4	12	45
29	Diseases ill-defined or unknown									
TOTALS ..		... 303	52	20	12	10	13	36	65	95

The Causes of Death at the Various Periods of Life, under 1 Year.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-3 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
Measles										
Diphtheria								1		1
Whooping Cough									2	2
Influenza									1	1
Pneumonia						3	4	2	1	10
Bronchitis			1	1	2		1			3
Tuberculosis							1	4		5
Convulsions										
Asphyxia										
Syphilis										
Infective Enteritis										
Congenital Malformation			2		2	3		1		6
Meningitis										
Gastritis										
Marasmus						1	1		1	3
Debility from Birth	3		1	2	6					6
Prematurity	9	2			11					11
Disease of Parturition										
Other Causes.			1		1		2		/	4
Uncertified								1		1
TOTALS	12	2	5	3	22	7	9	9	6	53